



ETHIOPIA

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
Population, Health, and Nutrition Briefing Sheet

Country Profile

Ethiopia, with 60 million people, is the second most populous country in sub-Saharan Africa. Recently emerging from a generation of civil war, authoritarian rule, and famine, Ethiopia is aggressively rebuilding its economic and social support systems. With 85 percent of the population residing in rural areas, agriculture is a major force in the economy. Located in the center of the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia plays an important role in many regional and continental programs.

USAID Strategy

Mortality rates for women and children in Ethiopia are among the highest in the world, and less than 20 percent of the population has access to modern health care. In response, USAID is committed to increasing the availability and use of primary and preventive health care (PPHC) services. Activities include:

- Developing a national capacity to reduce population growth, maternal and infant mortality, and the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs);
- Supporting nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to conduct child survival, family planning, and HIV/AIDS/STI programs in urban and peri-urban areas; and
- Assisting with the establishment of a sustainable service delivery system in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region (SNNPR), a region of 11 million people.

Major Program Areas

Essential Services for Health in Ethiopia. To help rebuild and expand the health infrastructure in Ethiopia's southern region, USAID is providing technical assistance, commodities, equipment, and training. Through this program, access to maternal and child health services will be made available to an estimated 1.6 million children less than five years of age, and to more than 2 million women. USAID also supports other child survival activities implemented by NGOs and is

strengthening local capacity to implement community action plans that promote child survival.

Private Sector Strengthening to Expand Reproductive Health Services. USAID supports a consortium of NGOs that provide family planning and reproductive health services. This assistance includes training, institutional development, networking, and direct services support.

Promotion of Family Planning. The mission is promoting sustained use of modern methods of family planning through social marketing of condoms and oral contraceptives; NGO capacity building; community-based distribution of contraceptives; and information, education, & communication (IE&C) activities to increase knowledge of family planning among women. The program also focuses on increasing government capacity to deliver family planning services.

Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS/STIs. USAID is building on its past success in conducting IE&C campaigns for HIV/AIDS prevention by developing integrated prevention, diagnosis, and treatment plans for STIs in urban areas. The mission is focusing on developing an effective national AIDS policy, strengthening public and NGO capacity and participation, and enhancing the integration of HIV/STI prevention and control into reproductive health programs at all levels. Complementary activities in the education sector promote a nationwide "family life" education curriculum.

Results

- The Federal Government of Ethiopia has increased health sector allocations in the total budget; its share has risen from 3 percent in 1993 to over 6 percent in 1996–98. Within the health budget, allocations to PPHC have risen from 43 percent in 1993 to 52 percent in 1998.
- In the SNNPR, USAID reports the following increases in the use of PPHC services:
 - Antenatal care: 27.2 percent of pregnant women in 1996 to 52.2 percent in 1997.
 - Third dose of DPT: From 60 percent of children in



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1996 to over 80 percent in 1997.

- Measles: From 46 percent of children in 1996 to 61 percent in 1997.
- Use of family planning services: From 2 percent of women in 1995 to 6 percent in 1996, and 7.5 percent in 1997
- USAID partners provided the means for over 244,000 couples to plan their families in 1997; this is a 100 percent increase from 1995.
- Social marketing increased condom sales from 30,000 in 1993 to 24 million in 1996.
- HIV/AIDS prevention activities led to a three-fold increase in patients being treated for STIs in 1996. In 1997, USAID was able to integrate a systematic approach to STI/HIV/AIDS interventions into 50 percent of Pathfinder's existing reproductive health programs.

Success Stories

Support for Policy Reform and Donor Coordination. USAID assistance is strengthening Ethiopian capacity to make informed decisions about resource allocation and cost recovery in health and family planning programs. The USAID mission chaired Ethiopia's Health, Population, and Nutrition Donors Group and sits on the committee charged with designing and implementing Ethiopia's National Health Sector Development Program. USAID is promoting policy reforms that are serving to expand delivery of community-level health services. In health care financing, USAID has helped increase budget allocations to PPHC and helped local health facilities institute fees and retain funds to improve services. To better inform decision-making processes, Ethiopia's first demographic and health survey is scheduled for 1999 with funding from USAID and the Government of Japan.

Information, Education, and Communications. To increase the demand for contraceptives and increase HIV/AIDS awareness, USAID supports a program that has conducted education sessions reaching a target audience of over 1.4 million. Advertisements on intercity and regional buses and taxis, in several languages on radio have contributed to an increased national awareness. A new development is advertising condoms and other contraceptives through sponsor-

ship of a popular TV program on a government-run station, reflecting the government's commitment to this sector.

Continuing Challenges

The severe lack of infrastructure and services in this predominately rural country continues to contribute to high rates of infant and child mortality. Despite some progress in family planning, the average Ethiopian woman still has seven children, maintaining a high rate of population growth that impedes the nation's ability to address food and other basic needs. Meanwhile, the AIDS pandemic calls for increased USAID support to expand HIV/AIDS information and prevention activities.

Working with the regional government and local organizations, USAID/Ethiopia will continue to develop its integrated program in the SNNPR. As USAID's experience and success grows, the mission will also develop mechanisms to convey achievements and lessons learned to all regions in the country. To maximize impact nationwide on the health situation, USAID will continue to work with the national and regional governments to promote more effective health policies and more efficient management of health sector resources.



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